

REMARKS

This Amendment is directed to the Final Office Action mailed July 24, 2007 setting a three month shortened statutory period for response expiring on October 24, 2007. Claims 19-34 are now pending. Claim 26 has been amended to correct a minor informality. Claim 19 has been amended to more clearly distinguish Applicants' invention from the prior art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the Office Action is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claim 19 specifically recites that Applicant's method includes providing to the patron an allocated return time at or after which the patron may enter the attraction in preference to a patron standing in a first in first out queue. This substantially differs from a reservation system as is specifically taught by Mahoney. It is critical to the understanding of Applicants' invention that this return time is **not** a reservation, even for a short period of time. Instead, the return time pass simply permits the patron to do other things rather than stand in a first in first out line that eventually gets the patron up to the entrance to the attraction. As such, the Applicants' invention merely permits the patron holding a return time to access the attraction in advance of those in the first in first out line. In other words, the second queue patrons access in preference to those standing in the first in first out queue, but **ONLY** at or after the allocated return time. In contrast, in Mahoney, at column 5, lines 26-36 he states:

“All spaces or places on a specific ride are available to non-card patrons 72 except those places which have been selected by a card holder 62 and that selection has also been confirmed by the card holder 62 after having their card read by the card line entry reader 64 during their scheduled time slot. Time slots that have not been selected by card holder 62 or time slots where card holders 82 did not have their card read during their scheduled window, are released by the waiting line management computer 16 to non-card holders 72 waiting at the non-card line access gate 90.

It is inherent in Mahoney that the attraction must hold the time slot open for the card holder at least for the duration of the time slot.

Thus Mahoney sets the spaces aside during the time slot, until expiration of the assigned time slot, or the patron gets his/her card read within the slot period. Only after the time slot

expires is the seat released to non-card holders. This is effectively a reservation system wherein spaces are held back for the card holders.

In contrast, in Applicants' independent claim 19, the allocated return time merely permits the holder of the allocated return time to step into the attraction in preference to the first in first out patron that does not hold an allocated return time.

Support for the claim amendments is found in Applicants' specification throughout, and in particular in paragraphs [0060 and 0061]. In paragraph [0060] the applicants state that "the customers in the first queue 24 have an order in line based on a time at which they enter the queue." Paragraph [0061] states "The customers in the first queue 24 are permitted to access the attraction when there is **an open spot not filled** by customers accessing the attraction via the second queue 26." In other words, the second queue takes preference over the first queue.

This progression of customers through the attraction is continuous, with no waiting in any way, in contrast to the prior art of Mahoney, where the reserved space for the second queue patron is held for the time slot/window period to permit the second queue patron to appear and claim his or her seat. **Only** upon expiration of this time span is the seat released to the patron waiting in the first queue. At least for the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that amended independent Claim 19 is not rendered obvious by Mahoney in view of Decker either together or in combination with other cited references such as Christie. Claims 20-34 depend from amended claim 19. Therefore, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 20-34 are not rendered obvious by Mahoney, Decker either. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections to Claims 19-34 be withdrawn and claims 19-34 be allowed.

Conclusion


Applicants submit that this amendment is responsive to all points in the Office action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should matters remain, which the Examiner believes could be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to telephone the Applicants' undersigned attorney. The Director is authorized to charge any additional fee(s) or any underpayment of fee(s), or to credit any overpayments to Deposit

Application No. 10/687,226
Docket No. 58085-010203

PATENT

Account Number **50-2638**. Please ensure that Attorney Docket Number 58085-010203 is referred to when charging any payments or credits for this case.

Respectfully submitted,



John R. Wahl
Reg. No. 33,044

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Customer Number 46560
GREENBERG TRAURIG, LLP
2450 Colorado Avenue, Suite 400E
Santa Monica, CA 90404
Phone: (310) 586-6541
Fax: (310) 586-7800
E-mail: wahlj@gtlaw.com